

Vision 2005

The Gospel and your self

11.13.05 | Isaiah 6:1-13

INTRODUCTION 10 minutes

Spend some time with everyone answering one or two of the following questions: What was the worst hairstyle that you ever had? What was the worst fashion trend that you ever participated in?

WORSHIP 20 minutes

Read these verses together. Lamentations was written during one of the darkest periods of Israel's history. The author, however, continues to have hope in the Lord.

Lamentations 3:19-26 (NIV)

- ¹⁹I remember my affliction and my wandering,
the bitterness and the gall.
²⁰I well remember them,
and my soul is downcast within me.
²¹Yet this I call to mind
and therefore I have hope:
²²Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail.
²³They are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.
²⁴I say to myself, "The LORD is my portion;
therefore I will wait for him."
²⁵The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him,
to the one who seeks him;
²⁶it is good to wait quietly
for the salvation of the LORD.

Spend a brief moment sharing one remarkable thing God is doing in your life right now.

Spend a moment in prayer together celebrating God's mercies that are new every morning.

Isaiah 6:1-13 (NIV)

¹In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. ²Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. ³And they were calling to one another:

“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty;
the whole earth is full of his glory.”

⁴At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

⁵“Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.”

⁶Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. ⁷With it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.”

⁸Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?”

And I said, “Here am I. Send me!”

⁹He said, “Go and tell this people:

“ ‘Be ever hearing, but never understanding;
be ever seeing, but never perceiving.’

¹⁰Make the heart of this people calloused;
make their ears dull
and close their eyes.

Otherwise they might see with their eyes,
hear with their ears,
understand with their hearts,
and turn and be healed.”

¹¹Then I said, “For how long, O Lord?”

And he answered:

“Until the cities lie ruined
and without inhabitant,
until the houses are left deserted
and the fields ruined and ravaged,

¹²until the LORD has sent everyone far away
and the land is utterly forsaken.

¹³And though a tenth remains in the land,
it will again be laid waste.

But as the terebinth and oak
leave stumps when they are cut down,
so the holy seed will be the stump in the land.”

STUDY & DISCUSSION 40 minutes

In these verses, Isaiah has a life-changing encounter with the living God, and in many respects Isaiah's entire mission and calling as a prophet begins here with this transformational vision. What we see in these verses is that an encounter with the living God can create a seismic shift in your priorities, value system, and view of wealth, time, and even safety. Immediately after these verses, Isaiah embarks on a career that has no prospects for success or material reward and yet he still takes it on! Is he out of touch with reality? Or, is he more in touch with reality than we are?

- 1. Verses 1-3 describe Isaiah's glorious vision of God. What do you think the central message of the vision is? What's going on here? (Hint: *Seraphim* are angels and their covering of their faces and feet is likely an expression of reverential deference.)**
- 2. Verses 4-5 describe Isaiah's response. How does Isaiah initially respond? Why do you think he responded this way? Have you ever responded to God in this way, and if not, why not?**
- 3. Verses 6-7 describe God's response to Isaiah. What is God's response?**
- 4. Finally, verses 8-13 describe Isaiah's response to all that has just happened. What is the heart of Isaiah's response? Why do you think he has responded this way even though God commissions him to preach a very difficult message?**
- 5. How might the reality of who God is change you as individuals or as an entire group? How might a similar vision and experience of God change Redeemer and the way that we approach and serve the city?**

DIRECTED PRAYER 20 minutes

- 1. Spend some time praying for Redeemer. Pray specifically that God would overwhelm Redeemer with a sense of his greatness and holiness.**
- 2. Pray also that Redeemer people would respond to who God is with lives of holiness, mission, and love for the city.**
- 3. Pray that Redeemer would increasingly be a church that loves serving the city.**

Vision Paper #8—Something Bigger than Yourself

As a follow-up to each study, we invite you to read one Vision Paper every week following your small group meeting. These have been written by Tim Keller to explain in more detail how the biblical aspect of the vision each week is fleshed out in the life of Redeemer. Each paper can be accessed at www.redeemer.com—follow the Vision Campaign Materials link.